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General Assembly

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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Organization of work: relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly

Note by the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The attention of the Special Committee is drawn to the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, listed in chapters II to IV below, which are relevant to the work of the Special Committee in 2003.

II. General resolutions on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

2. The Special Committee was established by the General Assembly pursuant to its resolution 1654 (XVI) of 27 November 1961. The Special Committee was requested to examine the application of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, and to make suggestions and recommendations on the progress and extent of the implementation of the Declaration.

3. By its resolution 1970 (XVIII) of 16 December 1963, the General Assembly decided to dissolve the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories, and requested the Special Committee to study the information transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations.

4. At the same session and at each subsequent session, the General Assembly, after considering the report of the Special Committee,[1] adopted a resolution renewing the mandate of the Special Committee.

5. At its thirty-fifth session, the General Assembly, on the basis of a recommendation of the Special Committee, adopted resolution 35/118 of 11 December 1980, the annex to which contains the Plan of Action for the Full

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Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

6. At its forty-third session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988, by which it declared the period 1990-2000 the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

7. At its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly, in its resolution 46/181 of 19 December 1991, adopted as a plan of action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism the proposals contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General dated 13 December 1991 (A/46/634/Rev.1). The plan stated that the Special Committee, with the cooperation of the administering Powers, should:

(a) Prepare periodic analyses of the progress and extent of the implementation of the Declaration;

(b) Review the impact of the economic and social situation on the constitutional and political advancement of Non-Self-Governing Territories;

(c) Organize during the Decade seminars in the Caribbean and Pacific regions alternately, as well as at United Nations Headquarters, to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the plan of action, with the participation of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, their elected representatives, the administering Powers, Member States, regional organizations, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and experts.

In addition, the Special Committee was to continue to seek, as a matter of priority, the full cooperation of the administering Powers with regard to the dispatch of United Nations visiting missions to Non-Self-Governing Territories and, with the cooperation of the administering Powers, was to make every effort to facilitate and encourage the participation of representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in regional and international organizations, as well as in the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the Special Committee itself and other United Nations decolonization bodies.

8. At its fifty-fifth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 55/146 of 8 December 2000, declaring the period 2001-2010 the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and called upon Member States to redouble their efforts to implement the plan of action, as contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General dated 13 December 1991 (A/46/634/Rev.1), updated where necessary, to serve as the plan of action for the Second Decade. The updated plan of action is contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General (A/56/61).

9. At its fifty-seventh session, after considering the report of the Special Committee,[2] the General Assembly adopted resolution 57/140 of 11 December 2002, in which it approved the report of the Special Committee covering its work during 2002, including the programme of work envisaged for 2003,[3] and requested the Special Committee to continue to seek suitable means for the immediate and full implementation of the Declaration and to carry out those actions approved by the General Assembly regarding the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism and the Second International Decade in all Territories that have not yet exercised their right to self-determination, including independence, and in particular:

(a) To formulate specific proposals to bring about an end to colonialism and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session;

(b) To continue to examine the implementation by Member States of resolution 1514 (XV) and other relevant resolutions on decolonization;

(c) To continue to examine the political, economic and social situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, and to recommend, as appropriate, to the General Assembly the most suitable steps to be taken to enable the populations of those Territories to exercise their right to self-determination, including independence, in accordance with relevant resolutions on decolonization, including resolutions on specific Territories;

(d) To finalize before the end of 2003 a constructive programme of work on a case-by-case basis for the Non-Self-Governing Territories to facilitate the implementation of the mandate of the Special Committee and the relevant resolutions on decolonization, including resolutions on specific Territories;

(e) To continue to dispatch visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories in accordance with relevant resolutions on decolonization, including resolutions on specific Territories;

(f) To conduct seminars, as appropriate, for the purpose of receiving and disseminating information on the work of the Special Committee, and to facilitate participation by the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in those seminars;

(g) To take all necessary steps to enlist worldwide support among Governments, as well as national and international organizations, for the achievement of the objectives of the Declaration and the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations;

(h) To observe annually the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories.[4]

In addition, the Assembly reaffirmed that the United Nations visiting missions to the Territories were an effective means of ascertaining the situation in the Territories, as well as the wishes and aspirations of their inhabitants, and called upon the administering Powers to continue to cooperate with the Special Committee in the discharge of its mandate and to facilitate United Nations visiting missions to the Territories, and also called upon the administering Powers that had not participated formally in the work of the Special Committee to do so at its session in 2003.

10. As at 1 January 2003, the Special Committee was composed of the following 23 members: Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia, Chile, China, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Mali, Papua New Guinea, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Sierra Leone, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania and Venezuela.

III. Resolutions and decisions concerning specific items considered by the Special Committee in 2002

11. In addition to resolution 57/140, the General Assembly adopted 10 other resolutions and 3 decisions relating to specific items considered by the Special Committee in 2002, which are listed below. Members will wish to take them into account in drawing up the Special Committee's programme of work for 2003.

A. Resolutions and decisions concerning specific Territories

1. Resolutions

Territory	*Resolution number*	*Date of adoption*
Western Sahara	57/135	11 December 2002
New Caledonia	57/136	11 December 2002
Tokelau	57/137	11 December 2002
American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, Turks and Caicos Islands, United States Virgin Islands	57/138 A and B	11 December 2002

2. Decisions

Territory	*Decision number*	*Date of adoption*
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	57/511	11 November 2002
Gibraltar	57/526	11 December 2002

B. Resolutions concerning other items

Title	*Resolution number*	*Date of adoption*
Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations	57/131	11 December 2002
Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories	57/132	11 December 2002
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations	57/133	11 December 2002
Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories	57/134	11 December 2002
Dissemination of information on decolonization	57/139	11 December 2002

C. Decisions concerning other questions

Title	*Decision number*	*Date of adoption*
Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration	57/525	11 December 2002

IV. Other resolutions relevant to the work of the Special Committee

12. Other resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session that are relevant to the work of the Special Committee are listed below:

Title	*Resolution number*	*Date of adoption*
South American zone of peace and cooperation	57/13	14 November 2002
Assistance for humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development for Timor-Leste	57/105	25 November 2002
Information in the service of humanity	57/130 A	11 December 2002
United Nations public information policies and activities	57/134 A and B	11 December 2002
Oceans and the law of the sea	57/141	12 December 2002
Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly	57/163	18 December 2002
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly	57/182	18 December 2002
International Decade of the World's Indigenous People	57/192	18 December 2002
Use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination	57/196	18 December 2002
Universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination	57/197	18 December 2002
The right to development	57/223	18 December 2002
Convention on Biological Diversity	57/260	20 December 2002
Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States	57/262	20 December 2002
Pattern of conferences	57/283	20 December 2002
Programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003	57/293 A, B and C	20 December 2002

Notes

[1] See the reports of the Special Committee submitted to the General Assembly at its eighteenth to fifty-seventh sessions. For the most recent, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/54/23); ibid., *Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/55/23); ibid., *Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/56/23); and A/57/23.

[2] A/57/23 (Parts I-III) (to be issued in final form as *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/57/23)).

[3] Ibid., Part I, chap. I, sect. J.

[4] See General Assembly resolution 2911 (XXVII).

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Organization of work

Note by the Chairman

1. Subsidiary bodies

1. During its previous sessions, the Special Committee conducted its work by considering the items directly at its plenary meetings. The meetings of the Bureau are open to all the members of the Special Committee. The Special Committee has increasingly relied upon informal consultations, thus striving to keep the number of its formal meetings to a minimum.

2. The Chairman recommends to the Special Committee that it continue to use informal meetings to the maximum extent possible. In the meantime, the Chairman may wish to discuss urgent as well as specific issues with the Bureau.

2. Allocation of items and procedure for consideration

3. Annexed to the present note is a list of pending matters for consideration by the Special Committee during the year. It includes decisions adopted by the Special Committee, together with an indication of the procedure that the Committee may wish to adopt for each item. In this regard, the Chairman would like to draw the attention of the Special Committee, in particular, to operative paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 57/140 of 11 December 2002, in which the Special Committee was requested to finalize, before the end of 2003, a constructive programme of work on a case-by-case basis for the Non-Self-Governing Territories to facilitate the implementation of the mandate of the Special Committee and the relevant resolutions on decolonization, including resolutions on specific Territories.

4. The Special Committee should take into account the resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session that are relevant to the work of the Committee, as listed in the note by the Secretary-General (A/AC.109/2003/L.1). It is also understood that the Special Committee should continue to be guided by the relevant provisions of the plan of action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism for the period 2001-2010

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(A/56/61, annex), declared by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/146 of 8 December 2000.

3. Order of priority for consideration of items

5. The Chairman will hold consultations with regard to the order of priority to be given for consideration of items in plenary meetings.

6. It is also his intention to hold consultations on specific activities envisaged under the plan of action for the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

7. In the meantime, subject to the availability of the working papers prepared by the Secretariat, it is suggested that the Special Committee conduct its substantive work in accordance with the schedule of meetings approved by the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session.[1]

4. Recommendations of the Special Committee to the General Assembly

8. In accordance with paragraph 31 of General Assembly decision 34/401 of 29 November 1979, and in the light of past experience and established practice, it is suggested that the Special Committee continue to follow the procedure adopted at its 1982 session[2] authorizing its Rapporteur to reformulate its decisions into draft decisions in General Assembly form and to submit them to the Assembly at its fifty-eighth session. The Special Committee may also wish to recommend that its Rapporteur continue to follow the format of its report to the General Assembly adopted at the 2000 session of the Special Committee.

5. Utilization of conference-servicing resources

9. At its fifty-seventh session, the General Assembly decided to waive rules 67 and 108 of its rules of procedure in order to permit meetings to be declared open and debates to proceed without the presence of the quorum required under those rules. The Assembly also decided that morning meetings should begin at 10.

10. As those measures have further enhanced the effective utilization of conference-servicing resources, it is suggested that the Special Committee continue to follow the same procedure. It should be understood that, in accordance with the rules cited, the presence of a majority of the members would continue to be required for any decisions to be taken.

Notes

[1] A/57/23 (Part I), chap. I, para. 47.

[2] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/37/23/Rev.1), chap. I, paras. 60-69.

Annex

A. Pending matters for consideration by the Special Committee during 2003

Question	*Procedure for consideration*
Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of All Colonial Territories (General Assembly resolution 2911 (XXVII), decision 37/421 and resolution 54/91)	As appropriate
Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (General Assembly resolution 55/146 and report of the Secretary-General (A/56/65, annex))	"
Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations and related questions (General Assembly resolution 57/131)	As a separate item
Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (General Assembly resolution 57/132)	"
Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration (General Assembly decision 57/525)	"
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 57/133)	"
Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories (General Assembly resolution 57/134)	"
Western Sahara (General Assembly resolution 57/135)	"
New Caledonia (General Assembly resolution 57/136)	"
Falkland Islands (Malvinas) (General Assembly decision 57/511)	"
Gibraltar (General Assembly decision 57/526)	"
Tokelau (General Assembly resolution 57/137)	"
American Samoa (General Assembly resolution 57/138 A and B)	"
Anguilla (General Assembly resolution 57/138 A and B)	"
Bermuda (General Assembly resolution 57/138 A and B)	As a separate item

Question	*Procedure for consideration*
British Virgin Islands (General Assembly resolution 57/138 A and B)	"
Cayman Islands (General Assembly resolution 57/138 A and B)	"
Guam (General Assembly resolution 57/138 A and B)	"
Montserrat (General Assembly resolution 57/138 A and B)	"
Pitcairn (General Assembly resolution 57/138 A and B)	"
Saint Helena (General Assembly resolution 57/138 A and B)	"
Turks and Caicos Islands (General Assembly resolution 57/138 A and B)	"
United States Virgin Islands (General Assembly resolution 57/138 A and B)	"
Question of sending visiting missions to Territories (General Assembly resolution 57/140, paras. 8 (e) and 14)	"
Compliance of Member States with the Declaration and other relevant resolutions on decolonization (General Assembly resolution 57/140, paras. 8 (b))	To be taken into consideration in the examination of specific Territories
Dissemination of information on decolonization (General Assembly resolution 57/139)	As appropriate
Special Committee decision of 10 June 2002 concerning Puerto Rico (A/57/23 (Part I), chap. I, para. 37)	"
Pattern of conferences (General Assembly resolution 57/283)	"
Question of holding a series of meetings away from Headquarters (A/AC.109/2002/L.16 and Corr.1, paras. 2 and 3)	"
Question of the list of Territories to which the Declaration is applicable (A/AC.109/2002/L.16, para. 10)	"
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (article 15 of the Convention)	"

B. Tentative programme of work and timetable of the Special Committee

Wednesday, 12 February (1 meeting)	Organization of work
March-April (4 meetings)	Organization of the forthcoming Caribbean Regional Seminar
Friday, 23 May (1 meeting)	Observance of the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories
Monday, Wednesday-Friday, 2, 4-6 June (4 meetings)	Dissemination of information on decolonization
	Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations
	Question of sending visiting missions to Territories
	Question of Gibraltar
	Question of Western Sahara
Monday and Tuesday, 9 and 10 June (4 meetings)	Special Committee decision of 10 June 2002 concerning Puerto Rico: hearing of petitioners
Wednesday-Thursday and Monday, 11, 12 and 16 June (4 meetings)	Question of New Caledonia
	Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, Tokelau, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands
	Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)
Tuesday-Thursday, 17-19 June (3 meetings)	Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations
	Report of the Caribbean Regional Seminar
Friday-Tuesday, 20, 23 and 24 June (3 meetings)	Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories
	Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration
	Report of the Special Committee: adoption of recommendations